

The Conversation of Young Ladies.

Young ladies are generally so ardent and so incantations, that whatever is in their thoughts and feelings will find vent in their conversation; the vain, the proud, the envious, the suspicious, will each exhibit in it her prevailing fault; and nothing but a diligent "keeping of the heart" can correct the evil. To give a few hints to such as are striving after this perfection, and to show how conversation may be made an intellectual growth, is the ob-

ject of this article. The connection with the love of ridicule is the spirit of exaggeration. How many persons, who would be shocked at the idea of telling a deliberate falsehood, yet daily violate truth by exaggerated statements and extravagant expressions. The root of our evil is in the intellect, and has its origin in the activity of the imagination, joined to an imperfect knowledge of language; where it is not early corrected it grows with the growth, and increases with the increase, to become one of the most incurable maladies of the mind. By some it is suddenly assumed, as a means of making themselves agreeable to their companions, or by way of displaying their talents in conversation; but they gain nothing in the end, and only find it difficult at times to

fid credence for so much as is really true; whereas, a person who is habitually so disposed, and who is not in the habit of language, will not only inspire confidence, but be able to produce a great effect by the occasional use of a superlative. Fidelity to the facts of life is the first duty of the narrative, and the habit of exaggeration destroys the power of accurate observation and recollection, which would render the interest of the story, instead of trying to enlighten, would only account with the fruits of her imagination, a young lady possesses the power of seizing upon the points best worth describing, and could give a more interesting account of what would be far more entertaining than any exaggeration could make her; for there is no romance like that of real life; and no more powerful means of producing an equal in piquancy the scenes and characters that are every day presented to our view. Extravagant expressions are some-

dispositions of memory and observation; but they will never hide such defects; and an habitual use of them lowers the tone of the mind, and renders it incapable of reason from the simplicity of truth and nature.

Another way of falsifying a narrative is by not taking for granted what you do not know, and by not stating what you do not know. This jumping at conclusions is a fruitful source of false reports, and does great mischief in the world. Let no one imagine that he is walking in the sun, or that he is in the habit of discriminating nicely between what *he* knows to be true, false, or doubtful, and what *others* may think so. Some girls without art wish to exaggerate, contrast a habit of using certain forcible expressions on all occasions, greet and bid, and consequently make some very absurd speeches.

The frequent use of some favorite word or phrase is a common defect in conversation. It is a habit which is easily acquired by asking your friends to point it out to you, whenever they observe such a habit; for your own ear, having been accustomed to

the epithet "glorious," or "splendid," to all sorts of objects indiscriminately from a gorgeous sunset to a good dinner. I was once passing Italy on my way to do a serious picnic party in the following terms:

"There were ten of us, four on horseback, and the rest in carriages, as we set off on a *glorious* ride, and when a *splendid* time it was, and the weather was *glorious*, and the perfect creature you ever saw, and capered along *gloriously*. When we got there, we all walked about the woods, and gathered the most *splendid* flowers, and dined *splendidly* on the most *glorious* food. We had our cold preserves spread out on the grass and everything was *elegant*. We had *glorious* appetites, too, and the collation was *splendid*, and put us all in fine spirits. We then sang the most *glorious* and funny songs, but one song made a horrid sentimental one, and so such a *dreadful* sentimental one, it made us all miserable. So then we broke up, and had a *splendid* time."

In this short account the word "glorious" is used five times, and in all but the last it is grossly misapplied; the same as in the case of the word "noble," except that it is not once used properly. "Elegant," too, is just inapplicable to horses and cold proofs. Yet this style of conversation is so common, that it hardly attracts the notice of many who, nevertheless, would scorn it at once if they thought of all about it.

Talking ironically, is, sometimes indulged in to such an excess as to become very tiresome to the hearers. A little of it is pleasant from its novelty; but some glances have such a hostile effect, that on all occasions, to persons of all ages, all degrees of intimacy and acquaintance,

will thus answer you in that strain: "Oh, yes! all reverence for you and superior wisdom, and all sense of propriety, are sacrificed to the indulgence of this propensity, while they are unconscious of its being in excess. To make the whole strain of conversation ironical is like serving up dinner composed wholly of gravies, sauces and condiments, without one substantial dish. **BE** like manner, all jesting, bantering and quibbling should be sparingly indulged in, and with constant reference to the feelings of others; or you may inflame it, would before you are aware of it.

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